

Because private financiers are often unwilling or unable to provide the funding to take a site through the full redevelopment cycle, local municipalities and local leaders find themselves confronted with the complex task of redevelopment.

The Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grant program was designed to help cities overcome this challenge.

The BEDI program helps communities to convert abandoned or underutilized sites into useful developments, thereby increasing the area's tax base and creating new job opportunities where none existed.

The BEDI program gives cities the opportunity to minimize urban sprawl and preserve existing green space by working with local developers and builders to utilize previously developed properties.

The program gives local communities a valuable tool to address blight, create new jobs, and expand their tax base.

BEDI IS DISTINCT FROM OTHER FEDERAL BROWNFIELD PROGRAMS

There is a clear and critical role for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to play in communities' efforts to redevelop Brownfield sites.

Unlike Brownfields programs in other agencies, BEDI funds are targeted for use, with a particular emphasis upon redevelopment.

Further, HUD emphasizes that resources are to be used on projects and activities that will provide near-term results and demonstrable economic benefits, such as job creation and increases in the local tax base.

Funds are used as the stimulus for local governments and private sector parties to commence redevelopment or continue phased redevelopment efforts on Brownfield sites.

Brownfields funds under other federal agencies, such as the EPA, are more focused on environmental clean-up.

HUD does not encourage applications whose scope is limited only to site acquisition and/or remediation (*i.e.*, land banking), where there is no immediately planned redevelopment.

PROBLEM WITH CURRENT STRUCTURE OF BEDI PROGRAM

While HUD's BEDI program is an important tool for communities to redevelop Brownfield sites, in its current form the grant is difficult, if not impossible, for local communities to utilize.

If a local community wishes to pursue Brownfields redevelopment funds from HUD, they must first apply for a Section 108 loan.

In order to secure this loan, they are required to put up a portion of their Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money as collateral.

The requirement that communities must obtain a Section 108 loan guarantee before they are awarded a BEDI grant has stymied the effectiveness of the BEDI program because it:

Makes it virtually impossible for small cities to access BEDI resources since they do not get their own CDBG entitlement grants from which to meet the required Section 108 collateral pledge.

Serves as a disincentive for small and mid-sized cities.

Discourages small projects.

Has proven difficult for many cities and counties to meet because of debt caps and concern that the addition of more Section 108 debt would jeopardize basic CDBG programs and services.

Without the Section 108 loan guarantee, cities are effectively locked out of the BEDI grant.

H.R. 280

H.R. 280 provides communities with the flexibility they need to finance Brownfields redevelopment projects.

It makes improvements to the BEDI program, ensuring that communities who have traditionally had trouble obtaining financing for Brownfields Redevelopment activities have access to needed capital.

Specifically, the bill authorizes appropriations for the BEDI program and eliminates the requirement that cities obtain Section 108 loan guarantees as a condition to receiving BEDI grant funding.

CONCLUSION

This legislation gives local communities a valuable tool to address blight, create new jobs, and expand their tax base.

With the flexible access to the BEDI grant program that this bill provides, we can help revitalize Brownfields sites across the country.

Cities have an opportunity to minimize urban sprawl and preserve existing green space by working with local developers and builders to utilize previously developed properties.

This bill will empower cities to take ownership of their Brownfields and work with their development community to design projects that utilize existing infrastructure.

Most importantly, it is estimated that more than \$2.4 billion in new tax revenues can be generated through Brownfields redevelopment.

Let's give cities access to the up-front financing they need to clean up Brownfields sites. I urge my colleagues to support this crucial legislation.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 280, which would allow the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to make grants to assist in the environmental cleanup and economic development of Brownfields sites.

I believe the Brownfields program is one of the most successful programs the Federal Government has to help revitalize urban areas.

These sites, typically in the heart of urban areas, lie idle because no one wants to incur the large costs associated with Superfund cleanups.

As a result, cities are marked by abandoned buildings and vacant lots while developers construct new buildings on what was previously open space in the suburbs.

Specifically, this legislation ensures that communities that have traditionally had trouble obtaining financing for Brownfields Redevelopment activities have access to needed capital.

Though small, these grants have served as seed money, enabling dozens of communities to leverage millions of state and private dollars to move into actual cleanup phase.

By reusing Brownfields sites we not only rebuild blighted communities, but also target development in city centers and avoid unnecessary urbanization on the fringes of metropolitan areas.

Mr. PASCARELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong support of H.R. 280, "The Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act" and want to thank Representative GARY MILLER for shepherding this important legislation through the House.

This legislation will remove unnecessary obstacles from localities that are poised to transform abandoned or underutilized sites into clean, marketable properties. This type of re-

development is an important ingredient in the economic recovery of many areas—creating jobs, improving the quality of the environment and spurring the preservation of open space.

There are few issues that we face that have as much strategic potential as redeveloping Brownfields sites.

This redevelopment is not just about real estate—it is a jobs issue, a health issue, an environmental issue, a housing issue and an economic development issue.

A relatively small investment by the Federal Government will yield tremendous benefits for our country's social and economic well being.

The HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) is particularly valuable for neighborhood revitalization, since only BEDI funds are specifically targeted for use in economic development projects.

Unfortunately, current law requires that cities obtain Section 108 loan guarantees as a condition of receiving a BEDI grant.

This makes it difficult for small and medium sized cities to obtain BEDI grants since they are often not able to raise the capital necessary to meet the Section 108 collateral requirement.

Let the Congress pass this common sense legislation to remove the Section 108 requirement and unleash the vast economic potential that lies dormant in our cities across the Nation.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 280, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 280, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

□ 1630

DESIGNATING CERTAIN BUILDINGS OF CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4500) to designate certain buildings of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4500

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ROSA PARKS HEADQUARTERS AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Headquarters and Emergency Operations Center building